

Minister's Summary by Minister Yosano**21st Meeting (September 22, 2006)**

- (1) Report by the Expert Committee on Government Assets and Debts Reform
- (2) FY 2007 Budget Requests

Kaoru Yosano here. Today, the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy (CEFP) held its 21st meeting of the year, the last one by the Koizumi cabinet. The report by the Expert Committee on Government Assets and Debts Reform and the FY 2007 Budget Requests were explained and the meeting finished in a very short period of time.

The Prime Minister made the following statement:

I really appreciate all that you have done in the past five years. The CEFP meetings were held 21 times this year and 187 times during the Koizumi cabinet. The number of times was so many and the period was so long. This means that we had such enthusiastic discussions and the reform turned out to be substantial. This is thanks to the support of all of you.

I request that you make fruit of the reform under the new Abe cabinet by taking over the past results and using the CEFP effectively. Thank you for your long-time support.

This is all for today's agenda. Lastly, I would like to add some comments, as we have reached a turning point.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all four expert members who have dedicated themselves to CEFP meetings 187 times and to pay my respects for their efforts.

Besides their energetic participation in the CEFP meeting despite busyness, they spent a lot of time attending the work group sessions, expert committees and four expert members' meeting for the preparation of the CEFP. Thus, they led the discussions of the CEFP.

Needless to mention their policy proposals, I particularly noted that they made a great change and great contribution to the Japanese government's policy decisions. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for sparing their precious time.

Regarding the future of the CEF, the CEF's way of making discussions and proposals, which had been valid under the Koizumi cabinet, will still function as an effective method under the new cabinet.

However, I think the CEF under the new Abe cabinet will differ from that of the Koizumi cabinet since the leader's personality trickles into the CEF style little by little. I would like the new cabinet to effectively utilize the CEF as the venue for the new Prime Minister to demonstrate his leadership.

There are various styles for the CEF. For example, the CEF can get one step ahead in every phase or proceed with full collaboration between the CEF and the ruling party. It seems more natural if the CEF is managed with the consideration of what style or method can best address problem solving according to the circumstances.

After all, the characteristics of the CEF consist in its boldness and rapidity, and I think the CEF will continue to be managed under the new Prime Minister with these points fully considered.

However, it goes without saying that the meetings should be managed with the attention to the realization of policies in terms of their planning, drafting and getting Diet approvals.

Therefore, it is not that the style adopted when I was taking charge of the CEF is the only good one. I think it best for my successors to choose the most appropriate managing style for each problem.

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